

Message Text

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21

ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMEMBASSY BERLIN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1082

INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

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EO 11652: NA

TAGS: PFOR, US, UR

SUBJECT: DINNER WITH ABRASIMOV

1. ON THE EVENING OF JULY 15, SOVIET AMBASSADOR TO THE GDR ABRASIMOV INVITED ME, THE DCM AND ONE OTHER EMBASSY OFFICER WITH OUR WIVES TO DINNER AT THE SOVIET EMBASSY TO CELEBRATE THE LAUNCHING OF THE APOLLO-SOYUZ FLIGHTS.

2. WE DINED UPSTAIRS IN LESS FORMAL SURROUNDINGS THAN THOSE PREVAILING ON THE LOWER FLOORS. IN A LONG TOAST ABRASIMOV STRESSED THE THEME OF COOPERATION IN THE APOLLO-SOYUZ VENTURE AND CHARACTERIZED THE SPACE AGE AS HAVING BEGUN WITH THE POINEERING WORK OF GAGARIN. WHILE THERE WAS LITTLE POLITICAL CONTENT TO WHAT ABRASIMOV SAID, THE GOOD WILL HE EXPRESSED AND THE MOOD OF THE EVENING CLEARLY WERE INTENDED TO PRESAGE WHAT THE SOVIETS HOPE WILL BE SIMILAR COOPERATION WITH US IN HELSINKI. MY RESPONSE, ALSO, WAS ESSENTIALLY NON-POLITICAL. AFTER DINNER, WE OBSERVED THE APOLLO TAKE-OFF LIVE ON TELEVISION.

3. SEVERAL OF THE RUSSIAN GUESTS EMPHASIZED THE SYMBOLISM IN THE FACT THAT US AND SOVIET ASTRONAUTS WOULD SHAKE HANDS AT A POINT IN SPACE ABOE THE ELBE

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RIVER, AS OTHER RUSSIANS AND AMERICANS HAD DONE SOME

THIRTY YEARS AGO.

4. IT WAS APPARENT FROM THE SEATING ARRANGEMENTS THAT THE PROTOCOL ORDER ON THE SOVIET SIDE, AFTER THE AMBASSADOR, WAS MINISTER-COUNSELOR GROMYKO, MINISTER SACHAROW AND MINISTER-COUNSELOR KHOTULEV.

5. COMMENT: THIS IS THE FIRST TIME I HAVE BEEN INVITED TO A PRIVATE FUNCTION AT THE SOVIET EMBASSY. EXTENSIVE PREPARATIONS HAD BEEN MADE ON THE RUSSIAN SIDE TO INSURE THE EVENING'S SUCESS. OUR HOSTS WERE EXTREMELY CORDIAL THROUGHOUT. THE IMPORTANCE ATTACHED BY THE SOVIETS TO THIS SPACE MISSION AS A MOOD SETTER FOR CSCE WAS AMPLY APPARENT. COOPER

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Message Attributes

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